

# THE TRUE GOD

AND HIS WORSHIP

## CONTRASTED WITH IDOLATRY.

In the midst of the grossest darkness and idolatry, and while the sectarian world around us are engaged in the worship of almost innumerable imaginary Gods, it is of the utmost importance that we come to the knowledge of the true God, and learn to worship him in spirit and in TRUTH.

Therefore, we must learn in the first place who the true God is; and secondly, what kind of worship he requires.

The Church of England, the Methodists, and, I believe, the Church of Scotland, in their several Articles of Religion, describe a God "WITHOUT BODY, PARTS, OR PASSIONS."

Now of all the species of idolatry ever invented by superstition and priestcraft, in either ancient or modern times, we do think this caps the climax. Indeed, it can hardly be said to be idolatry, for strictly speaking it amounts to *Atheism*. It is as much as to say, there is a God, and yet he does not exist; or there is a being, and there is no being; for reason teaches us that that being or thing which has a *whole* must have *parts*, for the whole is made up of parts. Therefore, to speak of a *being* or *thing*, and assert that it *is*, and that it has neither *body* or *parts*, is as much as to say that it has no *whole*, and if it has no whole it does not exist, therefore *it is not*.

But this God of half the Christian world, or rather this God and no God, is as contrary to Scripture as to reason and common sense. The Old and New Testament everywhere reveals a God with body, parts, and passions. The following are a few of the many texts which speak of his body and parts:—

Image.—Gen. 1st. 27th.

Eyes.—Prov. xv. 3rd.

Mouth.—Isaiah, lv. 11th.

Nose.—Isaiah, lxxv. 5th.

Lips and Tongue.—Isaiah, xxx. 27th.

Ear.—2nd Kings, xix. 16th.

Soles of his feet.—Ezekiel, xlili. 7th.

Arm.—Jeremiah, xxi. 5th.

Finger.—Exod. xxxi. 18th.

Fingers.—Psalms, viii. 3rd.

Loins.—Ezek. i. 27th.

Heart.—Gen. vi. 6th.

Nostrils.—Exod. xv. 8th.

Hand, face, and back parts. Exod. xxxiii. 22nd.

The foregoing abundantly show that the Father of our

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Lord Jesus Christ had both body and parts, to say nothing of Jesus Christ, who actually ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God, with flesh and bones.

Hence, what can we say of this sectarian "God without body, parts, or passions!!" as compared with Jehovah and Jesus Christ, or with Scripture and reason?

Let us now compare it with other systems of idolatry, and see if this God is equal to the several Pagan gods.

The Pagan gods are in Scripture described as having "eyes, but they see not," but this God has no eyes, let alone seeing; "ears have they, but they hear not," but this God has no ears; "hands have they, but they handle not," but this God has no hands; "feet have they, but they walk not," but this God has no feet!!

Now, we would earnestly exhort our readers to neither love, serve, nor fear the God of the Church of England, the Scotch, or the Methodists, as revealed in their articles of religion, for he can neither see, hear, speak, think, or walk; he can neither harm us nor do us any good; he can neither love us nor hate us; and for our part we have no reverence nor respect for him, to say nothing of veneration. And as to his power we defy it to harm us. In short, let us fear none but the living and true God, and him only let us serve.

But while on this subject of idolatry let us for a moment look at the manner in which this imaginary God is worshipped by his votaries

In the Book of Common Prayer, under the head of Morning Prayer, and also Evening Prayer, to be used by the minister and whole congregation every morning and evening throughout the year, we have these words addressed to the strange god described above:—

"We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done."

Now for a true penitent to make such a confession once, twice or thrice in his life, when he really feels sensible of it; and purposes to do differently, is well; but for a whole congregation to make a practice of saying this daily during their lives is really the height of mockery and folly. In order fully to comprehend this absurdity let us suppose, for instance we have a servant, who comes to us and says, I have left undone the duties which you required of me, and have done the things which you forbade me to do. Now, the master surprised to hear this, would perhaps reprove, but finally forgive his servant for once or twice, seeing he appeared sensible of his wrong, and manifested a disposition to do better. But what must be the master's surprise when this is repeated time after time, till he suspects his servant

has all this time been mocking him! And how must this surprise increase when, on looking over the written rules of this servant, he finds one which reads thus:—"This servant shall go to his master every morning and evening throughout the year, and shall say, master, I have left undone those things which I ought to have done, and have done those things which I ought not." This rule either compels the servant to lie to his master, and bear false witness against himself, or else on the other hand to continue his wicked course during his whole life. In either case it is adding falsehood and hypocrisy to his other sins; therefore, for all these confessions he must receive the greater condemnation. And so it would be with the *true* God, who requires *true worship*. But what a consolation it must be to these people to reflect that their God has neither body, parts, eyes or ears: therefore as he can neither hear nor see, this kind of worship will answer just as well as any other.

Now, the true God commands his worshippers, saying, "when ye pray use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking; be not ye therefore like unto them."

But the forms of the Church of England command, in the Book of Common Prayer, under the head of "Litany," that the name of the Deity be repeated at least fifty-two times in one prayer, and this prayer to be repeated on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays of each week, and at such other times as the *ordinary* shall command. This would amount at least to two hundred times a year. Multiply two hundred by fifty-two, and it makes just ten thousand and four repetitions in one year, of which the following are specimens:—

O God the Father of heaven, have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

O God the Father of heaven, have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

O God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

O God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

O God the Holy Ghost, &c. have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

O God the Holy Ghost, &c. have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

O Holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity, three persons and one God, have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

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Then follows

Good Lord deliver us;

Good Lord deliver us ;  
 nine times repeated.

We beseech thee to hear us good Lord,  
 We beseech thee to hear us good Lord,  
 repeated twenty-two times ; after which is the following :—

O Lamb of God, have mercy upon us.

O Christ hear us.

O Christ hear us.

Lord have mercy upon us.

Lord have mercy upon us.

Christ have mercy upon us.

Christ have mercy upon us.

Lord have mercy upon us.

Lord have mercy upon us.

After this follows the Lord's prayer, and then another long prayer, and still another, and then a grace or blessing, and *here endeth the Litany.*

Now if their God (like Baal) was asleep, this importunity would be apt to awaken him, at least he would have his nap out before it was through. If he was talking with some one, of course he would get through ere this service was done. Or if he was gone a journey, he would have time to get home again in season to hear it, and in either case he would doubtless answer them, in order to get rid of them lest they should weary him.

But as their god can neither go a journey, nor hear, nor converse, having neither feet, tongue, nor ears, their repetitions must be in vain, unless it is to kill time, or to charm themselves with the music of their own voices. But then, they have one advantage after all, and that is this,—that if this worship does not please their God, it will not offend him, nor make him angry, as he has no passions.

We will now notice one more instance of this kind of praying in the Book of Common Prayer, a subject entitled "*Order of Visiting the Sick.*"

The minister shall visit the sick person and in his presence make 36 distinct requests to God, each of which are laid down in full, and not one of the whole thirty-six requests touch the case of the sick person's bodily infirmities as to praying that he may be healed.

Daily bread is prayed for—thy kingdom come is prayed for—defence against enemies, in short, any thing but coming to the point, which is necessary, viz., Lord heal this sick person, through faith, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Now, what would be thought of a child who, when he wanted a piece of bread, would come to his mother and ask for a needle, a pin, a chair, a stand, a watch, a ring a pair of gloves, a hammer, a saw, a chisel, a toy, and so on, to thirty-six different articles, and last of all never mention the

bread. Think! why, the alarm would go abroad that the child was out of its wits, and in a high state of derangement. And so we should think of a man who comes to see a person groaning under disease, and kneeling by his bedside forgets what he needs, and asks for every thing else.

But here, too, we can excuse the people who worship the God without body or parts, as they must be sensible that this course will answer the purpose as well as any other. It will perhaps amuse the sick, and leave him more cheerful; while at the same time it cannot offend a *passionless* God, who never hears it.

We might turn for a moment from the Prayer Book, and call the attention of our readers to some of the prayer-meetings of our Methodists and others, where one would hear, "Lord convert souls; save souls, Lord; now, Lord, Lord, just now; send the power, Lord; Lord send the power, right down upon them—down upon them;" and these and many other things repeated in the wildest confusion many hundred times in one night; but the heart sickens at the thought of human folly, weakness, and superstition, as it really exists in these popular systems of the present day, yea, the mind turns away from the contemplation with the utmost disgust towards the principles, and with the highest degree of pity and compassion for its ignorant and unthinking votaries.

Let us now inquire after the true God, and after the manner of worshipping him.

The eternal Jehovah has revealed himself to man as enthroned in the heavens, while the earth is his footstool, and Jesus Christ as his Son seated at his right hand as a mediator, while the *spirit of truth*, proceeding from the Father and the Son, fills immensity, comprehends all things, and is the light, life, and spirit of all things, and the law by which they are governed, and by which they move and have their being. This God has ears to hear, eyes to see, and a mouth to speak; his arm is not shortened that he cannot save, neither is he destitute of power to deliver.

*He* created the worlds. *He* stopped the mouths of lions. *He* quenched the violence of fire. *He* multiplied the widow's meal and oil. *He* overturned kingdoms, and defeated his people. *He* divided the sea. *He* rained down manna. *He* smote the rock and the waters gushed out. *He* healed the sick and raised the dead. *He* is unchangeably the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and has promised to hear and answer those who worship him in *spirit* and in *truth*.

No eloquence of speech, or flowery composition can charm his ear or prevail with him. No vain repetitions or sense-

less round of forms and ceremonies can gain his favour. No unmeaning speeches or hypocritical sounds can influence him, or gain his smiles. He requires simple truth and real sincerity in all that we say before him. "In vain we worship him teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." In vain we call upon him, but do not the things which he says.

In vain we say Lord, Lord, while we leave undone the things which we ought to do, and do the the things which we ought not.

In his holy presence, the solemn assemblies, the new moons, the sabbaths, the baptisms, the sacraments, the fasts, the feasts, the sanctuaries, the tabernacles, the churches, the chapels, the sermons, the prayers, and the songs of this generation, are an abomination, so long as priestcraft, pride, oppression, covetousness, error, superstition, doctrines, commandments, and traditions of men are observed by them, instead of the word of eternal truth.

We shall now give some general instructions on the true worship of God. In the first place, we observe that in order to worship him acceptably we must abide in him, and his word in us, as it is written; "*If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will in my name, and I will give it you.*"

Here then, the conditions on which we may ask and receive are clearly manifested; and here is an immutable, unchangeable promise, opening a principle which is of more value to mankind than the world with all its glorious inventions and discoveries.

We have only to fulfil the conditions, that is, to abide in him and his word in us, and then we have privileges far superior to any which earthly monarchs can confer.

It would indeed be considered a great favour to a poor person if the Bank of England were to grant him the privilege of drawing freely on that institution to any amount, and at all times. This would give him a power and influence in the world which would make him more powerful than all the crowned heads of Europe, if the bank could fulfil this engagement to the full extent.

But, although he might relieve millions of the poor and distressed, and might command or influence the destiny of kingdoms and empires, yet he could neither purchase eternal life nor any of the gifts of God—no, not even the gift of health; and without health of body in this life, or a prospect of eternal life in the world to come, he might with all his wealth and power, be most miserable of all mankind.

But this glorious promise is so far superior to anything which the Bank of England can confer, that it not only

grants the privileges of temporal blessings to any amount, but it includes all other necessary things pertaining to the welfare of our souls and bodies, and of our friends and relations, both in time and eternity.

The child of God, according to this promise, may ask in prayer in the name of Jesus, for the following things among many others, namely—

If any one is sick or troubled with any manner of infirmity, they may ask to be healed.

If they are hungry they may ask for bread.

If they are destitute of clothing they can ask for raiment.

If they are involved in debt they can ask for means to pay.

If they are in want of employment they may ask for employment.

If they are in need of a friend they can ask for one to be raised up unto them.

If they wish an inheritance, where they may sit under their own vine and fig tree, and plant, and build, and enjoy the fruits of their labour unmolested, they may ask for this.

If they are in bondage and oppression they may ask for deliverance,

If in prison, in gloomy dungeons, and in chains they can ask for liberty.

If they desire to live to a good old age, they can ask for this privilege.

If they desire plenty of flocks and herds they may ask for them.

If they desire spiritual gifts, they may ask for wisdom, knowledge, faith, visions, dreams, revelations, prophecy, miracles, healings, tongues, interpretations, and the ministering of angels.

If the elements conspire against them they may ask for the winds to be rebuked, for the waters to be calm, for the fire to be quenched, or the mountains to be removed.

If the wild beasts would devour them, they may ask for the mouths of the lions to be closed; or if the sword combine for their destruction, they may ask for the armies of the aliens to be put to flight.

If famine would devour, they may ask for angels to bring them bread, for ravens to bring them meat, for their oil and meal to be multiplied or increased to any amount, or that five loaves and two fishes feed five thousand men.

These and ten thousand other things come within the range of our subjects of prayer; and to him that believeth all things are possible.

Yes, if we abide in Christ, and his word in us, we may come to the Father in his name for any of these blessings which our circumstances may require, and which we have

faith sufficient to receive, with as much assurance as did Elijah, when he asked Jehovah to consume the sacrifices in presence of the prophets of Baal.

Instead then of a form or forms of prayer, let us lay down the following rules of prayer:—

1st.—Never speak any thing to the Lord which we do not mean.

2nd.—Never ask for any thing which we have no expectation of receiving, or which is contrary to scripture; for instance never ask for the conversion of the world, when Jesus has said that his coming should be like the days of Noah, and that his coming and kingdom would destroy the wicked instead of converting them.

3rd.—Never use vain repetitions, and expressions foreign to the subject in hand, or to the object we have in view; for instance, when we pray for the sick, do not allow the mind to scatter and divide upon any and every subject, and thus weaken the force of our faith; but rather come directly to the point in hand, touching their disease, and as we are guided by the Holy Spirit.

4th.—Never ask any thing which is not expedient, and in this we are to seek the guidance and judgment of the Spirit.

5th.—Do not speak without something definite to say, and always stop when we get through, instead of a long and flowery speech by way of concluding or winding off.

6th.—Use all the simplicity and sincerity which a child, does when it comes to a parent for bread, and do not often repeat the sacred name of deity; but rather say “*Our Father who art in heaven,*” at the commencement of our prayer, and let that suffice; or at least, let our repetitions of his name be few.

7th.—Ask all we do ask in the name of Jesus:

8th.—Wait *patiently*, with an expectation of receiving after we have asked; and watch for it being fulfilled without doubting or wavering, for thus did Elijah when he prayed for rain. He looked at the sky, and prayed again; and then looked again and again, till at length a cloud the size of a man’s hand was discovered, and soon all the horizon was overspread, and the heavens gave rain.

O, unspeakable happy is that people whose God is the Lord!

“*All things are theirs, and they are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.*”

FINIS.